

Weekly Prayer Strategy

6 February 2017 – 12th February 2017

This week's prayer strategy is based on the sermon by Ps Tracy Nyamuda entitled Repositioning on Purpose. This week we have five prayer points. Please read through the sermon to get context as you pray.

Prayer Point 1

- **Pray that God delivers you from fearing the sight of people's faces.**
- **Pray for complete freedom from anything that will hinder you from "girding up your loins" ie preparing for your God-given assignment.**
- **Pray that God shows you how to prepare for the opportunities that are lying ahead of you.**
- **Pray that God clarifies His purpose for this season of your life.**

Jer 1:17AMP. "But you [Jeremiah], **gird up your loins!** Arise and tell them all that I command you. Do not be dismayed and break down at the sight of their faces, lest I confound you before them and permit you to be overcome.

Whenever I read in the old testament where someone is told to gird up their loins, or there is a descriptive passage in which someone is described as girding up their loins, there is a reason for it. Girding the loins was done to best prepare oneself for the activity one was about to engage in. In the Old testament, they would wear long robes, and girding their loins meant tucking their robe into their girdle, or tucking their robe up in such a way as it would not hinder their next activity.

God was instructing Jeremiah to prepare and arrange himself for the next thing God had for him. He was instructing Jeremiah to reposition himself for his purpose (in the next season).

Jer 1:17MSG. "But you—**up on your feet and get dressed for work! Stand up** and say your piece. Say exactly what I tell you to say. Don't pull your punches or I'll pull you out of the lineup".

Jer 1:17NIV. **“Get yourself ready! Stand up** and say to them whatever I command you. Do not be terrified by them, or I will terrify you before them.”

Jer 1:17NLT. **“Get up and prepare for action. Go out** and tell them everything I tell you to say. Do not be afraid of them, or I will make you look foolish in front of them.”

- What season are you in right now?
- What is God doing in you?
- What season are you going into?
- How could God want you to best position yourself and prepare for the purpose He has for you (next)?

Prayer Point 2

- **Pray that God matures this local church so that we understand God’s processes.**
- **Pray that we cooperate with God’s process in our lives.**
- **Pray that we develop hearts that embrace growth in character and attitude.**
- **Pray that we pass the tests in our lives instead of continuously going round and round the same mountain without graduating to the next level.**

To best position ourselves with respect to the purpose of God in our lives, we need to make sure we understand the process that God often uses to bring us into the fullness of His purpose. From what I see in scripture and what I have experienced of God, he is not necessarily a linear A to B via the fastest route/as the crow flies/straight line type of God. We tend to have our 1 year, 2 year, 5 year and if we are really organised and goal-oriented, even 10 year plans. Nothing wrong with that. But I don’t think God operates on our time line. He is more about maturity, readiness, ripeness, which is more about heart, attitude, character and humility, trusting Him, faith and passing tests, than meeting a specific time deadline.

The Israelites in the Wilderness are a classic example of this. God delivered them from Egypt, led them through the wilderness and preserved them. Took them to Kadesh Barnea where the 12 spies were sent in to the promised land to bring back

a report. Out of the 12 sent in, only 2 came back with a report that exhibited faith in their hearts (Caleb and Joshua), the rest of the spies were not positioned correctly in their hearts in terms of faith. The Israelites showed that they, too, were in unbelief and not ready to enter the promised land.

Num 14:1-45 Then the whole community began weeping aloud, and they cried all night. (2) Their voices rose in a great chorus of protest against Moses and Aaron. "If only we had died in Egypt, or even here in the wilderness!" they complained. (3) "Why is the LORD taking us to this country only to have us die in battle? Our wives and our little ones will be carried off as plunder! Wouldn't it be better for us to return to Egypt?" (4) Then they plotted among themselves, "Let's choose a new leader and go back to Egypt!" (5) Then Moses and Aaron fell face down on the ground before the whole community of Israel. (6) Two of the men who had explored the land, Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, tore their clothing. (7) They said to all the people of Israel, "The land we traveled through and explored is a wonderful land! (8) And if the LORD is pleased with us, He will bring us safely into that land and give it to us. It is a rich land flowing with milk and honey. (9) Do not rebel against the LORD, and don't be afraid of the people of the land. They are only helpless prey to us! They have no protection, but the LORD is with us! Don't be afraid of them!" (10) But the whole community began to talk about stoning Joshua and Caleb. Then the glorious presence of the LORD appeared to all the Israelites at the Tabernacle. (11) And the LORD said to Moses, "How long will these people treat Me with contempt? Will they never believe Me, even after all the miraculous signs I have done among them?

(21) But as surely as I live, and as surely as the earth is filled with the LORD's glory, (22) not one of these people will ever enter that land. They have all seen My glorious presence and the miraculous signs I performed both in Egypt and in the wilderness, but again and again they have tested Me by refusing to listen to My voice. (23) They will **never even see the land I swore to give their ancestors. None of those who have treated Me with contempt will ever see it.** (24) **But My servant Caleb has a different attitude than the others have. He has remained loyal to Me, so I will bring him into the land he explored. His descendants will possess their full share of that land.** (25) Now turn around,

and don't go on toward the land where the Amalekites and Canaanites live. Tomorrow you must set out for the wilderness in the direction of the Red Sea. " (26) Then the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, (27) "How long must I put up with this wicked community and its complaints about Me? Yes, I have heard the complaints the Israelites are making against Me. (28) **Now tell them this: 'As surely as I live, declares the LORD, I will do to you the very things I heard you say. (29) You will all drop dead in this wilderness! Because you complained against Me, every one of you who is twenty years old or older and was included in the registration will die. (30) You will not enter and occupy the land I swore to give you. The only exceptions will be Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun. (31) "You said your children would be carried off as plunder. Well, I will bring them safely into the land, and they will enjoy what you have despised. (32) But as for you, you will drop dead in this wilderness. (33) And your children will be like shepherds, wandering in the wilderness for forty years. In this way, they will pay for your faithlessness, until the last of you lies dead in the wilderness. (34) "Because your men explored the land for forty days, you must wander in the wilderness for forty years—a year for each day, suffering the consequences of your sins. Then you will discover what it is like to have Me for an enemy.'** (35) I, the LORD, have spoken! I will certainly do these things to every member of the community who has conspired against Me. They will be destroyed here in this wilderness, and here they will die!" (36) The ten men Moses had sent to explore the land—the ones who incited rebellion against the LORD with their bad report— (37) were struck dead with a plague before the LORD. (38) Of the twelve who had explored the land, only Joshua and Caleb remained alive.

God led the whole nation back into the wilderness and they circled there until the whole generation of people in unbelief had died except for Caleb and Joshua. What could have taken 6 weeks, max, took 40 years.

Prayer Point 3

- **Pray against resentment, discouragement and disillusionment as we experience delay in the fulfilment of God's promises.**
- **Pray that we remain broken, humble and pure in heart as we wait for the fulfilment of the dream of God in our lives.**

- **Pray that we deal well with envy, jealousy and treacherous acts against us as God begins to promote us.**
- **Pray that we develop a forgiving attitude, like Joseph, towards those who have sought to destroy us.**

1. Joseph

The first one is an example of how essential constant repositioning of the heart is in God's journey to purpose fulfilment. We need to understand how God moves us towards fulfilment of His purposes so that we don't get disillusioned along the way.

Whenever we speak about repositioning with respect to purpose, we must talk about God's process and journey.

"Speak to them about my journeys". I can hear people asking God "why does it take so long?" I can hear people saying "Just tell me what to do and I'll do it?"; some saying "what am I doing wrong?" "why is this taking so long" "just help me God, please?".

And the Lord wants to give us more understanding of His dealings with us, of how He wants us to align ourselves with His purposes in the seasons we find ourselves in.

Act 7:9-10 "And the patriarchs, becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt. But God was with him (10) and delivered him out of all his troubles, and gave him favour and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house."

We can be envied and treated unfairly even by those closest to us and those we call "brothers" and God still be with us. We can be "sold out" by those we trusted, and God still be with us. We can appear to be in slavery in the natural and God still be with us and leading us through the process to the other side.

Jacob was cheated, mistreated, lied to, and yet we are told that he was blessed.

God likes the journey because His purposes for our hearts are often fulfilled in the journey. And the journey is often where He readies us for the place He is calling us to next.

Gen 37:4-30NIV But **his brothers hated Joseph** because their father loved him more than the rest of them. **They couldn't say a kind word to him.** (5) **One night Joseph had a dream**, and when he told his brothers about it, they hated him more than ever. (6) "Listen to this dream," he said. (7) **"We were out in the field, tying up bundles of grain. Suddenly my bundle stood up, and your bundles all gathered around and bowed low before mine!"** (8) His brothers responded, **"So you think you will be our king, do you? Do you actually think you will reign over us?"** And they hated him all the more because of his dreams and the way he talked about them. (9) Soon Joseph had another dream, and again he told his brothers about it. **"Listen, I have had another dream," he said. "The sun, moon, and eleven stars bowed low before me!"** (10) This time he told the dream to his father as well as to his brothers, but his father scolded him. **"What kind of dream is that?"** he asked. **"Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow to the ground before you?"** (11) But while his brothers were **jealous of Joseph**, his father wondered what the dreams meant. (12) Soon after this, Joseph's brothers went to pasture their father's flocks at Shechem. (13) When they had been gone for some time, Jacob said to Joseph, "Your brothers are pasturing the sheep at Shechem. Get ready, and I will send you to them." "I'm ready to go," Joseph replied. (14) "Go and see how your brothers and the flocks are getting along," Jacob said. "Then come back and bring me a report." So Jacob sent him on his way, and Joseph traveled to Shechem from their home in the valley of Hebron. (15) When he arrived there, a man from the area noticed him wandering around the countryside. "What are you looking for?" he asked. (16) "I'm looking for my brothers," Joseph replied. "Do you know where they are pasturing their sheep?" (17) "Yes," the man told him. "They have moved on from here, but I heard them say, 'Let's go on to Dothan.'" So Joseph followed his brothers to Dothan and found them there. (18) When Joseph's brothers saw him coming, they recognized him in the distance. As he approached, **they made plans to kill him.** (19) "Here comes the dreamer!" they said. (20) "Come on, let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns. We can tell our father, 'A wild animal has eaten him.' Then we'll see what

becomes of his dreams!" (21) But when **Reuben** heard of their scheme, he came to Joseph's rescue. "Let's not kill him," he said. (22) "Why should we shed any blood? Let's just throw him into this empty cistern here in the wilderness. Then he'll die without our laying a hand on him." Reuben was secretly planning to rescue Joseph and return him to his father. (23) So when Joseph arrived, his brothers ripped off the beautiful robe he was wearing. (24) Then they grabbed him and threw him into the cistern. Now the cistern was empty; there was no water in it. (25) Then, just as they were sitting down to eat, they looked up and saw a caravan of camels in the distance coming toward them. It was a group of Ishmaelite traders taking a load of gum, balm, and aromatic resin from Gilead down to Egypt. (26) **Judah** said to his brothers, "What will we gain by killing our brother? We'd have to cover up the crime. (27) Instead of hurting him, let's sell him to those Ishmaelite traders. After all, he is our brother—our own flesh and blood!" And his brothers agreed. (28) So when the Ishmaelites, who were **Midianite traders**, came by, Joseph's brothers pulled him out of the cistern and **sold him to them for twenty pieces of silver**. And the traders took him to Egypt. (29) Some time later, Reuben returned to get Joseph out of the cistern. When he discovered that Joseph was missing, he tore his clothes in grief. (30) Then he went back to his brothers and lamented, "The boy is gone! What will I do now?"

Gen 37:36 Meanwhile, the Midianite traders arrived in Egypt, where they sold Joseph to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Potiphar was captain of the palace guard.

Joseph had a dream. The Word of the Lord came to him. He was going to rule. Even his mother, father and 11 brothers would bow down to him. Wow. What a powerful Word from God. It may have been burning in His heart, like a Word from God tends to.

Where does he find himself at this point in the story? A slave. A slave in Egypt, very far from those whom he saw bowing to him.

How should Joseph position himself for God's purpose at this point?

- Should he start telling everyone he is meant to rule.
- Should he become arrogant and refuse to serve?

- Should he take offence at what had happened to him, or that his very own brothers were the ones who were envious and hatted him and sold him out?

The positioning Joseph needed to do was that of humbling himself, maintaining a pure heart.

Eph 4:8-10: "Therefore He says: "WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE, AND GAVE GIFTS TO MEN." (9) (Now this, "HE ASCENDED"—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? (10) He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)"

Ever noticed how God tends to leave out the small print and the cost in his promises? There will be a descent before the ascent. There always is.

Joseph's is a classic example: from the Declaration of the Word to the fulfilment of the promise was quite a journey. It was a journey of the heart, as well as a physical journey. It involved tests of his heart, attitude, integrity, Lordship and obedience.

Let's continue with the story:

Gen 39:1-23 When Joseph was taken to Egypt by the Ishmaelite traders, he was purchased by Potiphar, an Egyptian officer. Potiphar was captain of the guard for Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. (2) **The LORD was with Joseph, so he succeeded in everything he did as he served in the home of his Egyptian master.** (3) Potiphar noticed this and realized that the LORD was with Joseph, giving him success in everything he did. (4) This pleased Potiphar, so he soon made **Joseph his personal attendant. He put him in charge of his entire household and everything he owned.** (5) From the day Joseph was put in charge of his master's household and property, the LORD began to bless Potiphar's household for Joseph's sake. All his household affairs ran smoothly, and his crops and livestock flourished. (6) So Potiphar gave Joseph complete administrative responsibility over everything he owned. With Joseph there, he didn't worry about a thing—except what kind of food to eat! Joseph was a very handsome and well-built young man, (7) and Potiphar's wife soon began to look at him lustfully. **"Come and sleep with me,"** she demanded. (8) But Joseph refused. "Look," he told her, "my master trusts me with

everything in his entire household. (9) No one here has more authority than I do. He has held back nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How could I do such a wicked thing? **It would be a great sin against God**" (the fear of God). (10) She kept putting pressure on Joseph day after day, **but he refused to sleep with her**, and he kept out of her way as much as possible. (11) One day, however, no one else was around when he went in to do his work. (12) She came and grabbed him by his cloak, demanding, "**Come on, sleep with me!**" **Joseph tore himself away (fled temptation), but he left his cloak in her hand as he ran from the house.** (13) When she saw that she was holding his cloak and he had fled, (14) she called out to her servants. Soon all the men came running. "Look!" she said. "My husband has brought this Hebrew slave here to make fools of us! **He came into my room to rape me (false accusation)**, but I screamed. (15) When he heard me scream, he ran outside and got away, but he left his cloak behind with me." (16) She kept the cloak with her until her husband came home. (17) Then she told him her story. "That Hebrew slave you've brought into our house tried to come in and fool around with me," she said. (18) "But when I screamed, he ran outside, leaving his cloak with me!" (19) Potiphar was furious when he heard his wife's story about how Joseph had treated her. (20) So **he took Joseph and threw him into the prison where the king's prisoners were held, and there he remained** (mistreated and the victim of injustice) (21) But the LORD was with Joseph in the prison and showed him His faithful love. And the LORD made Joseph a favorite with the prison warden. (22) Before long, the warden put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners and over everything that happened in the prison. (23) The warden had no more worries, because **Joseph took care of everything. The LORD was with him and caused everything he did to succeed.**

- As a prisoner in the king's prison in Egypt with trumped up charges, lies and accusations piled against him, how should he best position himself for the promise of God? How would you?

Positioning ourselves must first be a repositioning and constant repositioning of our hearts toward:

- those who have hurt us,
- those who have lied about us,

- those who have cheated us and accused us,
- those who have abused their authority and wounded us,
- God who may not have fulfilled our expectations of the journey.

God was with Joseph and he was blessed. He was lied about, falsely accused, mistreated and experienced injustice, and so forth, yet GOD WAS WITH HIM. We have to change our perspective and expectations of what it looks like when God is with us. God prospered Joseph in each place he found himself in,- whether it was a slave in Poriphars house, a prisoner in the King's prison, or....

Let's continue the story:

Gen 40:1-23 Some time later, **Pharaoh's chief cup-bearer and chief baker offended** their royal master. (2) Pharaoh became angry with these two officials, (3) and he **put them in the prison** where Joseph was, in the palace of the captain of the guard. (4) They remained in prison for quite some time, and the captain of the guard assigned them to Joseph, who looked after them. (5) While they were in prison, **Pharaoh's cup-bearer (and baker) each had a dream one night, and each dream had its own meaning.** (6) When Joseph saw them the next morning, he noticed that they both looked upset. (7) "Why do you look so worried today?" he asked them. (8) And they replied, "We both had dreams last night, but no one can tell us what they mean." "Interpreting dreams is God's business," Joseph replied. "Go ahead and tell me your dreams." (9) So the chief **cup-bearer told Joseph his dream first.** "In my dream," he said, "I saw a grapevine in front of me. (10) The vine had three branches that began to bud and blossom, and soon it produced clusters of ripe grapes. (11) I was holding Pharaoh's wine cup in my hand, so I took a cluster of grapes and squeezed the juice into the cup. Then I placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand." (12) "This is what the dream means," Joseph said. "The three branches represent three days. (13) Within three days Pharaoh will lift you up and restore you to your position as his chief cup-bearer. (14) And **please remember me and do me a favor when things go well for you. Mention me to Pharaoh, so he might let me out of this place. (Did he want to get out. YES!!)** (15) For I was kidnapped from my homeland, the land of the Hebrews, and now I'm here in prison, but I did nothing to deserve it."

Gen 40:23 Pharaoh's chief cup-bearer, however, **forgot all about Joseph, never giving him another thought.**

- Ever feel forgotten, alone, insignificant?
- Ever helped someone, loved on someone, ministered to someone even, and felt taken for granted?
- Ever felt unappreciated?

I'm sure Joseph faced all these heart temptations and more.

Gen 41:1 **Two full years later, Pharaoh dreamed** that he was standing on the bank of the Nile River.

Two years later! Two whole years in that prison because of a false accusation. And still forgotten. But God ...

But God had not forgotten. God doesn't forget. He just tests. He prunes, He moulds, He makes.

(2) In his dream he saw **seven fat, healthy cows** come up out of the river and begin grazing in the marsh grass. (3) Then he saw **seven more cows** come up behind them from the Nile, but these were scrawny and thin. These cows stood beside the fat cows on the riverbank. (4) Then **the scrawny, thin cows ate the seven healthy, fat cows!** At this point in the dream, Pharaoh woke up. (5) But he fell asleep again and had a second dream. This time he saw **seven heads of grain, plump and beautiful**, growing on a single stalk. (6) Then **seven more heads of grain appeared, but these were shriveled and withered** by the east wind. (7) And these **thin heads swallowed up the seven plump, well-formed heads!** Then Pharaoh woke up again and realized it was a dream. (8) The next morning Pharaoh was very disturbed by the dreams. So he called for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. When Pharaoh told them his dreams, **not one of them could tell him what they meant.** (9) **Finally, the king's chief cup-bearer spoke up. "Today I have been reminded** of my failure," he told Pharaoh. (10) "Some time ago, you were angry with the chief baker and me, and you imprisoned us in the palace of the captain of the guard. (11) One night the chief baker and I each had a dream, and each dream had its own meaning. (12) There was a young Hebrew man with us in

the prison who was a slave of the captain of the guard. We told him our dreams, and he told us what each of our dreams meant. (13) And everything happened just as he had predicted. I was restored to my position as cup-bearer, and the chief baker was executed and impaled on a pole." (14) **Pharaoh sent for Joseph at once** (suddenlies happen with God, but they are never really suddenlies.. He will have been planning them all along) and he was quickly brought from the prison. After he shaved and changed his clothes, he went in and stood before Pharaoh. (15) Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I had a dream last night, and no one here can tell me what it means. But I have heard that when you hear about a dream you can interpret it." (16) "It is beyond my power to do this," Joseph replied. "But God can tell you what it means and set you at ease." (17) So Pharaoh told Joseph his dream. "In my dream," he said, "I was standing on the bank of the Nile River, (18) and I saw seven fat, healthy cows come up out of the river and begin grazing in the marsh grass. (19) But then I saw seven sick-looking cows, scrawny and thin, come up after them. I've never seen such sorry-looking animals in all the land of Egypt. (20) These thin, scrawny cows ate the seven fat cows. (21) But afterward you wouldn't have known it, for they were still as thin and scrawny as before! Then I woke up. (22) "Then I fell asleep again, and I had another dream. This time I saw seven heads of grain, full and beautiful, growing on a single stalk. (23) Then seven more heads of grain appeared, but these were blighted, shriveled, and withered by the east wind. (24) And the shriveled heads swallowed the seven healthy heads. I told these dreams to the magicians, but no one could tell me what they mean." (25) Joseph responded, **"Both of Pharaoh's dreams mean the same thing.** God is telling Pharaoh in advance what He is about to do. (26) The seven healthy cows and the seven healthy heads of grain both represent seven years of prosperity. (27) The seven thin, scrawny cows that came up later and the seven thin heads of grain, withered by the east wind, represent seven years of famine. (28) "This will happen just as I have described it, for God has revealed to Pharaoh in advance what He is about to do. (29) The next seven years will be a period of great prosperity throughout the land of Egypt. (30) But afterward there will be seven years of famine so great that all the prosperity will be forgotten in Egypt. Famine will destroy the land. (31) This famine will be so severe that even the memory of the good years will be erased. (32) As for having two similar dreams, it means that these events have been decreed by God, and He will soon make them happen. (33) "Therefore, Pharaoh should find an

intelligent and wise man and put him in charge of the entire land of Egypt. (34) Then Pharaoh should appoint supervisors over the land and let them collect one-fifth of all the crops during the seven good years. (35) Have them gather all the food produced in the good years that are just ahead and bring it to Pharaoh's storehouses. Store it away, and guard it so there will be food in the cities. (36) That way there will be enough to eat when the seven years of famine come to the land of Egypt. Otherwise this famine will destroy the land." (37) **Joseph's suggestions were well received by Pharaoh and his officials.** (38) So Pharaoh asked his officials, "Can we find anyone else like this man so obviously filled with the spirit of God?" (39) Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "**Since God has revealed the meaning of the dreams to you, clearly no one else is as intelligent or wise as you are.** (40) **You will be in charge of my court, and all my people will take orders from you. Only I, sitting on my throne, will have a rank higher than yours.**" (41) Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I hereby put you in charge of the entire land of Egypt." (42) Then Pharaoh removed his signet ring from his hand and placed it on Joseph's finger. He dressed him in fine linen clothing and hung a gold chain around his neck. (43) Then he had Joseph ride in the chariot reserved for his second-in-command. And wherever Joseph went, the command was shouted, "Kneel down!" So Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of all Egypt. (44) And Pharaoh said to him, "I am Pharaoh, but no one will lift a hand or foot in the entire land of Egypt without your approval." (45) Then Pharaoh gave Joseph a new Egyptian name, Zaphenath-paneah. He also gave him a wife, whose name was Asenath. She was the daughter of Potiphera, the priest of On. **So Joseph took charge of the entire land of Egypt. (46) He was thirty years old when he began serving in the court of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt.**

(51) Joseph named his older son **Manasseh, for he said, "God has made me forget all my troubles and everyone in my father's family."** (52) **Joseph named his second son Ephraim, for he said, "God has made me fruitful in this land of my grief."**

- Do you think Joseph had to deal with betrayal of the deepest kind?
- Did Joseph have grief?
- Did Joseph face incredible difficulty?
- Did God prosper Joseph? Was Joseph blessed?

- These are not mutually exclusive.
- Was God with Joseph? Yes. I think many of us may have been tempted to cry out, “why have you forsaken me Lord? Just tell me what to do and I will do it! What have I done wrong?” Maybe Joseph cried out. But God had Joseph on his journey and knew what He was doing.

The conclusion of the account is that Joseph’s family did ultimately come and bow down before him during the famine as they needed grain. Only, they didn’t know that it was Joseph.

We see by Joseph’s response to them that he had been faithful in positioning his heart and keeping his heart pure towards his family and everyone else in Egypt. Listen to what He says. He ultimately had come to a place of understanding God’s process and journey, God’s timing and seasons.

Gen 45:2-8 Then he broke down and wept. He wept so loudly the Egyptians could hear him, and word of it quickly carried to Pharaoh's palace. (3) "I am Joseph!" he said to his brothers. "Is my father still alive?" But his brothers were speechless! They were stunned to realize that Joseph was standing there in front of them. (4) "Please, come closer," he said to them. So they came closer. And he said again, **"I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into slavery in Egypt. (5) But don't be upset, and don't be angry with yourselves for selling me to this place. It was God who sent me here ahead of you to preserve your lives. (6) This famine that has ravaged the land for two years will last five more years, and there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. (7) God has sent me ahead of you to keep you and your families alive and to preserve many survivors. (8) So it was God who sent me here, not you! And He is the One who made me an adviser to Pharaoh—the manager of his entire palace and the governor of all Egypt.**

(55) Eventually, however, the famine spread throughout the land of Egypt as well. And when the people cried out to Pharaoh for food, he told them, "Go to Joseph, and do whatever he tells you." (56) So with severe famine everywhere, Joseph opened up the storehouses and distributed grain to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe throughout the land of Egypt. (57) And people from all around came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph because the famine was severe throughout the world.

Prayer Point 4

- **Pray that we begin to see God as our source of promotion as opposed to man.**
- **Pray that we see that we are part of something bigger than ourselves. May we see our purpose in the greater context of God's purposes for the nations. He is the Grand Weaver.**
- **Pray that you begin to yield to God as your Potter in a deeper way.**

Joseph understood that it is God who raises up one and puts down another. He also understood that his position of influence and authority, the position that had cost him dearly for many years of his life, was not actually ever for him. It was to keep many other people alive. To preserve many people.

"Our" purposes are never for us alone. They can never be.

I love the account of Joseph's life. It speaks so clearly concerning the journey God often takes us on from when He declares a promise over us, to when He tests and proves and prepares us for the fulfilment of that promise, and then finally fulfils His promise in the fullness of time. Joseph's life is a picture of the constant repositioning of our hearts that is required to fulfil God's purposes.

When God wants to drill a man,
And thrill a man,
And skill a man
When God wants to mould a man
To play the noblest part;

When He yearns with all His heart
To create so great and bold a man
That all the world shall be amazed,
Watch His methods, watch His ways!

How He ruthlessly perfects
Whom He royally elects!
How He hammers him and hurts him,
And with mighty blows converts him

Into trial shapes of clay which
Only God understands;
While his tortured heart is crying
And he lifts beseeching hands!

How He bends but never breaks
When his good He undertakes;
How He uses whom He chooses,
And which every purpose fuses him;
By every act induces him
To try His splendor out-
God knows what He's about.

– Anonymous

Jer 18:1-6 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: (2) "Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause you to hear My words." (3) Then I went down to the potter's house, and there he was, making something at the wheel. (4) And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to

make. (5) Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: (6) "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?" says the LORD. "Look, as the clay *is* in the potter's hand, so *are* you in My hand, O house of Israel!

Isa 40:25-31 "To whom then will you liken Me, Or *to whom* shall I be equal?" says the Holy One. (26) Lift up your eyes on high, And see who has created these *things*, Who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, By the greatness of His might And the strength of *His* power; Not one is missing. (27) Why do you say, O Jacob, And speak, O Israel: "My way is hidden from the LORD, And my just claim is passed over by my God"? (28) Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. (29) He gives power to the weak, And to *those who have* no might He increases strength. (30) Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, (31) But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew *their* strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

2. Abraham

Abraham is an example of someone who had to reposition himself physically to be in alignment with the purposes of God. It is also an example of we need to reposition ourselves to be in a place of faith.

Prayer Point 5

- **Pray for a willingness to move from your comfort zone.**
- **Pray for the Word to become rich in you so that your faith increases.**
- **Pray that we grow in boldness to stand up on our feet and shoulder responsibility at new levels.**
- **Pray that God delivers His people from unbelief.**
- **Pray for strength to unswervingly trust in God's character and His name despite the circumstances.**
- **Pray for wholeness in our self-images so that we believe that God is for us and not just for others.**

Gen. 12:1

Now the LORD had said to Abram: "**Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house**, to a **land that I will show you**."

- Country: Identity, the things, the place that you cling to as identity, as home.
- Family: Identity, the people, the people spot, the influence, the name, the provision, the safety blanket, the comfort, the belonging.
- Father's house: in your Father's house there is inheritance, there is safety, there is a security, there is provision, ultimate responsibility doesn't rest fully on your shoulders....

This speaks to me of a calling to total trust in God in every way,- for identity, for belonging, for provision, for assistance....

It speaks to me of a coming of age so to speak, a call to maturity, a standing up on one's feet with a willingness to shoulder complete responsibility for others.

- To a land I **WILL** show you:

God was calling Abraham to leave everything he held most dear without showing him where exactly He was taking him. He was calling Abraham to leave and trust Him at His word. God was calling Abraham to leave the good for something better that God had in mind. This something that was in His heart and mind involved the fulfilment of God's purposes for many more people than just Abraham. Yet it began with one man, with God calling Abraham to reposition himself regardless of the personal cost. God was calling Abraham to reposition himself physically, in faith, without knowing exactly what the outcome would look like.

- In what areas do you think God could be calling you to reposition yourself?

God was calling Abraham to step out in **faith**.

Heb 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Abraham didn't know where he was going, he just knew he had to go, and he had to go with God, and that God would show him where He was calling him. That is faith.

It cost Abraham. And the cost to Abraham was before Abraham would see anything of what God was calling him to.

Too often we want to see the promise fulfilled before we have even walked a road of faith. We want to see the end before we begin. Often, we want this because we want to evaluate if it will be worth it all, or if it will really happen.

An example of this is young ladies with potential husbands. Especially when they are men who are not Christians. But it applies to many of us in many different ways.

The reason many of us are in this place is because:

- We don't know God and so we don't trust Him
- We don't trust God's Word and promises - we have unbelief in our hearts
- We have such poor self-images and we think God sees us the way we see ourselves and think he will view us as unworthy because that's how we view ourselves

- We have “made God in our own image” so to speak and see him the way we are - not trustworthy, temperamental, and changeable.
“Blaise Pascal once wrote: "God made man in his own image and man returned the compliment.”
- How do you think God may be calling you into a place of faith?

Gen 12:2-3:

(2) I will **make you a great nation**; I will bless you and make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. (3) I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Abraham’s response:

(4) So Abram **departed as the LORD had spoken to him (#obedience)**, and **Lot went with him**. And Abram was **seventy-five years old** when he departed from Haran. (5) Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and they departed to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of Canaan. Gen. 12:4-5 NKJV

- Abraham obeyed
- He took people with him

Gen. 15:1-6

After these things, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward." (2) But Abram said, "Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?"

Abram also struggled with waiting for the fulfilment of God’s promises.

(3) Then Abram said, "Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!" (4) And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your

heir." (5) Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." (6) And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. Gen 15:1-6NKJV

Heb. 11:8-12NKJV

Heb. 11:8-12. By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. (9) By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise...

(11) By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. (12) Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

Gen 16:15-16 So Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. (16) **Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.**

Gen 17:1-25 When Abram was **ninety-nine years old**, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. (2) And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly." (5) No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a **father of many nations**.... (15) Then God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. (16) And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her." (17) Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" ... (It's interesting how in matters close to the heart it is sometimes harder to remain in faith) (21) But My covenant I will establish with **Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year.**"

25 years!

- How long are you willing to wait for the fulfilment of God's promise?

God fulfilled His promise, just not on Abraham's timeline.